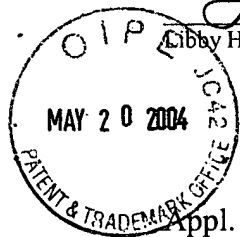


CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

Ref. No.: 12439-0011

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail on May 17, 2004 in an envelope addressed to Mail Stop RCE, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Libby Hill
Libby Hill

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Appl. No. : 09/260,794
Applicant : Ondricek et al.
Filed : March 1, 1999
TC/A.U. : 2823
Examiner : W. Brewster

Confirmation No. 6932

Docket No. : 03401.P090

Mail Stop RCE
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Sir:

Listed on an attached Form PTO/SB/08A is information known to applicant(s). A copy of each listed document is provided. Applicants ask that the attached Form PTO/SB/08A be initialed and returned in accordance with MPEP §609. This statement is not intended to represent that a search has been made or that the information cited in the statement is, or is considered to be, material to patentability as defined in §1.56.

☒ This statement qualifies under 37 C.F.R. §1.97, subsection (b) because (check all that apply):

- ☐ (1) It is being filed within 3 months of the application filing date (other than the filing date of a continued prosecution application under §1.53(d))
-- OR --
- ☐ (2) It is being filed within 3 months of entry of a national stage
-- OR --
- ☐ (3) It is being filed before the mail date of the first Office Action on the merits
-- OR --
- ☒ (4) It is being filed before the mail date of the first Office Action after the filing of a request for continued examination under §1.114.

☐ 37 C.F.R. §1.97(c). If this statement is being filed after the latest of: (1) three months beyond the filing date of a national application; (2) three months beyond the date of entry of the national stage as set forth in §1.491 in an international application; (3) the mailing date of a first Office action on the merits, or (4) the mailing date of a first Office Action after the filing of a request for continued examination under §1.114, but before the mailing date of the earlier of a final office action under §1.113, a notice of allowance under §1.311, or an action that otherwise closes prosecution in the application, then:

☐ a statement as specified in §1.97(e) is provided below; **or**

☐ a fee of \$180.00 as set forth in §1.17(p) is authorized below, enclosed, or included with the payment of other papers filed together with this statement.

☐ 37 C.F.R. §1.97(d). If this statement is being filed after the mailing date of the earlier of a final office action under §1.113, a notice of allowance under §1.311, or an action that otherwise closes prosecution in the application, but before payment of the issue fee, then:

A. a statement as specified in §1.97(e) is provided below; **and**

B. a fee of \$180.00 as set forth in §1.17(p) is authorized below, enclosed, or included with the payment of other papers filed together with this statement.

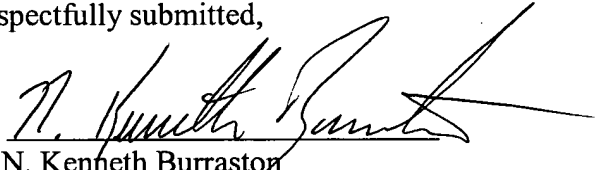
Fee:

☒ No fee is due.

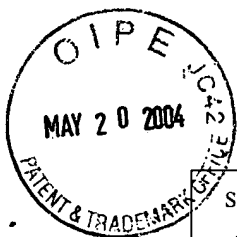
☐ A check in the amount of \$_____ for the above-identified fee(s) is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: May 17, 2004

By 
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12439-0011

Modified Form PTO/SB/08A

Substitute for form 1449A/PTO INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (use as many sheets as necessary)				<i>Complete If Known</i>	
				Application Number	09/260,794
				Filing Date	March 1, 1999
				First Named Inventor	Ondricek et al.
				Group Art Unit	2823
				Examiner Name	W. Brewster
				Attorney Docket No.	P90-US
Sheet	1	of	1		

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS						
Examiner Initials*	Cite No. ¹	U.S. Patent Document		Name of Patentee or Applicant	Publication Date	Relevant Portions
		Number	Kind Code ²			
	1	4899107		Corbett et al.	2/6/1990	
	2	5359285		Hashinaga et al.	10/25/1994	
	3	5742487		Kobayashi et al.	4/21/1998	

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS								
Examiner Initials [*]	Cite No. ¹	Foreign Patent Document			Name of Patentee or Applicant	Publication Date	Relevant Portions	T ⁶
		Office ³	Number ⁴	Kind Code ⁵				
	4	JP	04-080672		Masuno	3/13/1992		x
	5	JP	05-036792		Nishiguchi et al.	2/12/1993		x
	6	JP	08-179006		Nakamura et al.	7/12/1996		x
	7	JP	08-213794		Kobayashi et al.	8/20/1996		x
	8	JP	10-197598		Inoue	7/31/1998		x

Examiner Signature		Date Considered	
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EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication

¹Unique citation designation number. ²See attached Kinds of U.S. Patent Documents. ³Enter Office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ⁴For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁵Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.16 if possible. ⁶Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language Translation is attached.